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A

DISCOURSE

ON

FRIENDSHIP.

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Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.—This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. CHRIST.

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A

DISCOURSE, &c.

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A man that hath friends, muſt ſhew himſelf friendly.

FRIENDSHIP is a natural and moral virtue; deſirable in every ſituation; and one of the neareſt and moſt endearing relations ſubſiſting among mankind. It is the union and ſympathy of ſouls; and "the medicine of life." But, like every other good, it is often abuſed: Hence, ſcarce any thing is more common than the profeſſion; or more rare, than the reality of genuine friendſhip. "Every friend ſaith, I am his friend alſo: but there is a friend who is only a friend in name."

Friendſhip, like moſt other virtues, is preſſed into the ſervice of all the faſhionable vices; and too often, is a cover for the vileſt actions. Such abuſe is, indeed, reprobated by all honeſt men: yet, however, the bare profeſſion of friendſhip paſſes current with moſt men. "*Sir, I am your friend,*" is given and received, as a polite compliment, where there is no idea of obligation on the one hand; or of dependence on the other. This nominal deception keeps vice in countenance, by rendering it familiar.

Very ſimilar to this, is that friendſhip, extolled by many, which conſiſts in not taking pleaſure in

the misfortune of a neighbour; or, perhaps, in contentment with his prosperity, wherein it does not interfere with their own: that is, they are not disposed to injure him; or to rejoice in his misfortune any further than it may subserve their own interest. *This*, doubtless, will be received for friendship, when bare humanity shall deserve that title.

The profession of friendship may serve for many vile purposes. The wise son of Sirach says, "There is a companion who rejoiceth in the prosperity of a friend: he is a companion of the table: but, in the time of trouble, will be against him. Again, Some man is a friend for his own occasion, and will not abide in the day of thy trouble." Thus, many "bless their friend with a loud voice, rising early in the morning." They have some purposes to effect, perhaps, good and laudable in themselves; yet, by no means for the interest of their neighbor to be engaged in. They, therefore, conceal their ends and designs from him; and by artful address and friendly professions, engage his friendship and assistance: but, their purposes being effected, the poor man finds himself gulled, and the tool of a masked villain! To call such professions, *friendship*, is a prostitution of the term, and burlesquing with a witness. Let me then engage your attention for a few minutes, to the subject of *real and genuine Friendship*.

I shall in the first place endeavor, briefly, to characterize a friend—Secondly, I shall make some observations on the advantages of having friends—and lastly, mention some things, as necessary to the obtaining and preserving them.

The character of a friend will in the first place claim our attention.—The leading trait in such a character is, *Love*—an esteem and respect for another on a principle of real affection, arising from some real, or supposed worth. Friendship, is more than bare civility—a speaking well to, or of a person. One who is most indifferent, or even an ene-

my, may, out of ſelf-intereſt, or in concurrence with general opinion, ſay and do many kind things to, and for a perſon, whom they would rejoice to neglect, and even ruin, could they turn it equally to their own advantage. This is the maſk of friendſhip, to hide baſeneſs of heart. A friend has a ſimilarity of mental taſte and feeling—a ſympathy of ſoul, which produces the exerciſes of tender affections and high eſteem. And, as eſteem implies merit in the object, ſo the affection and eſteem will be as laſting as the apparent merit, and no longer; for the moment we ceaſe to perceive merit, we ſhall ceaſe to eſteem—the fountain being dried up, the ſtreams will neceſſarily ſtop flowing.

This love of friendſhip, does not ſuppoſe a *complacency* in all the conduct of our friend. We may be diſpleaſed with many things, yet feel truly benevolent towards him: and ſuch love will alſo cover a multitude of faults, and excite us to many friendly actions concerning, both, his faults and virtues.

This leads me to obſerve, that "a friend loveth at all times"—he has a fixed principle of benevolence in his heart. Trifles will not move him; nor will he forſake us, until we forſake virtue; and even then, his hand will hold us, and his heart bleed for our return. He will not neglect us, nor be our enemy, though he find us imperfect and liable to many errors: He, alſo, has his faults, and expects our forbearance with them, and kind conſtruction of them. Notwithſtanding ſome natural, or even moral defects, he will be friendly while he finds that worth and merit which firſt engaged his eſteem. *He loveth at all times.* He loveth in health and in ſickneſs; in proſperity and in adverſity; in our virtues and in our faults; in good and in bad repute. Such a friend, is a *friend* indeed. But that perſon who loves in proſperity, and forſakes in adverſity—who loves while he can make us his inſtruments of gain, reputation, or pleaſure; and

then abuſes or neglects us, is a *vile wretch and bane of friendſhip.*

I obſerve again; a friend is confidential—One, in whom we can cheerfully place explicit and implicit faith. Confidence, is the very *ſoul* of friendſhip—that, without which, every other friendly qualification will be marred and of little conſequence. And for this confidence, our friend muſt have good ſenſe, prudence, upright intentions, truth and punctuality: without theſe qualifications, we can have no juſtifiable confidence in him. Unleſs he has ſenſe to ſee the fitneſs and relation of things, and prudence, honeſty, and good faith to arrange and conduct them; our confidence in him, will be *as a broken tooth, or a foot out of joint.*

It is utterly impoſſible for a fool or a knave to be a faithful friend. Nor can *we* put confidence in a perſon given to folly, falſehood, deceit, equivocation and a maſked conduct. In ſuch caſes there can be no ſafety.—Among friends there muſt be plain, undiſguiſed dealing, and a mutual confidence, or elſe a rupture. A friend, therefore, is one who caſts off diſguiſe, diſcovers a plain, honeſt heart; and approves himſelf to be what he profeſſes.

He muſt not only be confidential in matters of ſpecial privacy, but maintain a uniform probity and ſincerity through the whole courſe of friendly connexion. Such a friend will partake of our joys, our ſorrows and griefs: his advice, rejoicing, conſolation and reproof will be the expreſſions of affection. Into the boſom of ſuch a friend, we can pour our whole heart: it increaſes our joys and alleviates our ſorrows.

Such was the friendſhip between David and Jonathan; they opened their hearts to each other, and took ſweet counſel together: and we read, that Jonathan loved David, as he loved his own ſoul. Their mutual affection and confidence were ſtrong, ſincere and fervent. Hence David's lamentation

over his departed friend—" I am diſtreſſed for thee my brother Jonathan: very pleaſant haſt thou been unto me: thy love to me was wonderful, paſſing the love of women."

I obſerve, once more; a friend has a ſincere regard for our intereſt in eſtate and reputation. He is not, like many, a mere friend of the table—full of profeſſions, that he may raiſe a reputation, or get a living at our expenſe. This is pure *ſelfiſhneſs*. A friend ſeeks our good as his own—he loves us as himſelf—he does as he would be done by.

He is not contented with mere profeſſions and uſeleſs wiſhes: He approves himſelf a friend by his deeds. He does not ſay, " Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled;" but does, and gives what is needful. He feels an intereſt in our proſperity, health and good name; and endeavors to preſerve and promote them.—He is always ready to aſſiſt us by his counſels, conſolations and charity, as occaſion may require.

He will, alſo, encourage others to do us good; and conſtantly oppoſe our enemies as his own: thus, he divides with us our gain and loſs—our pleaſures and our ſorrows.

And, ſo far as he is influenced by divine wiſdom and heavenly philanthropy, he will ſeek to promote our ſpiritual and eternal happineſs.

This is a friend indeed, the moſt precious of all worldly acquiſitions. With ſuch a friend, adverſity would be tolerable, and proſperity happy. But no worldly good can compenſate the loſs of him. Riches, pleaſures and honors are inſipid without the participation of a friend. I come now,

Secondly, To make ſome obſervations on the comforts and advantages of having friends.—" Thine own friend and thy father's friend forſake not—Iron ſharpeneth iron; ſo a man ſharpeneth the countenance of his friend." As rational and ſocial beings, we wiſh for friends and are pleaſed

with them : and truly, without them, ſocial life would be dreadful and intolerable ! In our friendſhip, we imitate the Divine Author of our holy religion, who went about doing good, was a friend to all, and gave his life for the life of the world. And it is his expreſs command, that *we love one another, as he hath loved us.* The friendſhip of this world is never enmity to God, unleſs, when preferred to him, and oppoſed to a life of godlineſs. But when formed by nature's law, Chriſt's example and precept, it is the will of heaven, and the benefit and comfort of every man. It is meet and ſuitable to his ſtate, in every circumſtance of life.

No perſon in the world can be comfortable without a friend. The high, the low, the rich, the poor, all, have frequent occaſion for a friend.—Some, for labor—ſome, for counſel—ſome, for rejoicing and amuſement—ſome, for condolence—and all of us need one for ſociability and the various comforts of life. Indeed, the condition of a beggar on a dunghill, with a friend, is preferable to that of a king on a throne, without one.

Much may be ſaid upon the advantages and comforts of friendſhip, as manifeſted by the abſence and preſence of friends ; but in ſuch caſes, our expreſſions will not do juſtice to our feelings. Let it ſuffice to ſay, that nature points out the neceſſity and pleaſures of friendſhip. Thus we obſerve children, from two or three years old and upward, form their little attachments and friendly connections : and the ſorrow they feel at parting from ſuch friends ; or at the diſſolution of their attachments, very forcibly deſcribe the pleaſure they felt in them. But as we grow into riper years, our friendſhip is connected with other paſſions and other intereſts ; and, in many inſtances, becomes very advantageous and exceedingly affecting.—Our feelings, upon the loſs of ſuch dear friends, teach us the worth of them beyond all poſſibility of ſpeech.

And moſt certain it is, no connexion in this life, whether family, civil or religious, can be happy without friendſhip. Thus, if we look into family life, where the huſband and wife are very diſſimilar in their mental taſte, views of intereſt, reputation and family government, we ſhall find confuſion in moſt of their affairs, and diſcord in their hearts.—The children catch the infection, oppoſe and quarrel with each other; and when reproved by one parent, fly to the other for protection—hard words, perhaps blows, end the fray. I will not call this life hell on earth: let thoſe who have tried it, give it a name.

But let us now look into a family of friends, where the huſband and wife are connected by a ſimilarity of mental taſte; a union of hearts; a union of intereſt; a union of family government—Their deſigns, are one—their joys, one—and their ſorrows, one—harmony, ſmiles in all their affairs.—The children, as branches of the ſame ſtock, receive the ſame ſpirit of union; live in love and friendſhip among themſelves, and in obedience to their parents. To this deſcription, let me add, *vital piety*, and the picture is complete: if Heaven dwells on earth, it is in ſuch a family! Agreably to which, King David ſings, "Behold, how good and how pleaſant it is, for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard; that went down to the ſkirts of his garments; as the dew of Herman, and as the dew that deſcended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the Lord commanded the bleſſing, even life for evermore."—Theſe examples need no comment; the advantages and comforts of friendſhip are apparent.

And ſhould we turn our thoughts to civil, or religious ſociety, ſimilar obſervations will apply, in a certain, and intereſting point of light.—Where

the heads and rulers of a people are in union with the body, all their public affairs are readily tranſacted—peace ſmiles on the whole—proſperity and increaſe crown their friendly endeavours—God commands his bleſſing; and they are bleſſed indeed.

But very different is the ſtate of that ſociety, which is deſtitute of friendſhip: there, is no charity, and little, or no confidence. The door is open for diviſion, and every evil work; every man has an intereſt, and deſign, diverſe from his neighbour: Meaſures are diſconcerted—ill will ariſes—ſociety is broken up—and they are curſed in their very bleſſings!

We muſt alſo notice the benefits of friendſhip, with relation to our ſeveral ſtages of life.—Youth, have great occaſion for faithful friends, to provide for them—to protect, inſtruct, encourage, caution and admoniſh them, while entering into the buſy ſcenes of life.

Middle age, is a time of life, full of cares, troubles, and vexations. At this ſtage, moſt perſons have many, and ſome, *peculiar* occaſions for a friend, both in health, and in ſickneſs; in public, family and perſonal concerns.

Old age, commences a ſecond child-hood, and ſtands in need of its friends, to attend upon, and provide for it—to ſooth and comfort it, under the burdens of declining years, and the approaches of death.

Different characters, alſo, have occaſion for friends. The *good man*, receives great comfort and benefit in the ſociety of pious friends: it makes him wiſer and better; and ripens him for the enjoyments of the heavenly world.—And the *wicked man*, may find infinite advantage in having a true friend: it may ſave him from great ſhame and evil in this life; and, perhaps, from eternal ſhame and miſery in the world to come.—The advantages and comforts of

friendſhip, being ſo immenſely great, naturally lead us to enquire,

Thirdly, what is neceſſary to be done, for obtaining and preſerving friends.

The firſt thing I ſhall inſiſt upon is, the importance of forming juſt eſtimates, and right opinions of ourſelves, and others. This remark, though readily aſſented to in theory; is ſeldom ſufficiently reſpected in practice. We are too apt to think higher and better of ourſelves; and lower of others, than we ought to think. This caſts an inſuperable bar in the way of genuine and pure friendſhip—others cannot, or will not approach us in the character we aſſume; nor will they acknowledge that, which, we allot them. Thus a ſilly pride reſtrains our friendſhip, in proper character, towards them; and at the ſame time, refuſes theirs; or, at leaſt, ſo embarraſſes the expreſſions of it, that it is of little, or no real value to either of us.

So long as we think higher of ourſelves and lower of others than a proper eſtimate will juſtify, we cannot meet on the ground of mutual and confidential friendſhip; for, however deſirable a laſting friendſhip may be, yet, our ſelf-conceit exalts us above their reach; and a too mean opinion of them, depreſſes them below ours. Conſequently, whatever forms of friendſhip may take place between us, they will be governed by ſelf-intereſted motives, not by mutual eſteem, and ſimilarity of taſte: And ſuch motives ceaſing, or being diſcovered by the other party, friendſhip will alſo ceaſe, or, at leaſt, degenerate into mere formality.

But friendſhip, formed between perſons of ſimilar mental taſtes, and on proper eſtimates of each other, will be permanent: it is eſtabliſhed on a juſt and equitable eſtimation: And nothing can diſſolve ſuch friendſhip, ſhort of the real, or ſuppoſed loſs of the ground of that eſtimation. Would we, therefore, obtain, or keep friends, we muſt careful-

ly form proper eſtimates of ourſelves, and of them: and act undiſguiſedly in our eſtimated characters.

This, ſuggeſts the importance of being, and feeling friendly to all men. A fair outſide may paſs for a ſeaſon; but will ſoon wear out, or be diſcovered: like the way of ſinners, it is a hard way. Would we do any thing to purpoſe, we muſt have the *reality* of friendſhip: Love, begets love:—Friendſhip, begets friendſhip.—It is not ſufficient, however, that we merely love them that love us—it is pure ſelfiſhneſs. Our holy religion requires, that we have the fountain of love in our own hearts; and that we love and do good to all men, eſpecially, to the houſehold of faith, who, if they act in character, are the beſt of friends; and as ſuch, demand the firſt expreſſions of friendſhip in us.

It is obſervable, notwithſtanding, that Chriſtian benevolence looks directly to the object itſelf; and not to the quality—the fitneſs and ſuitableneſs of it. Complacency in an object, is no way neceſſary, to our wiſhing and doing well: we can, and ought to love our enemies, and pray for them who deſpitefully uſe us. Although we cannot be friends to ſuch, in the full extent of complacency, intimacy, and confidence; yet, we may be *real* friends—reſpect their perſons and characters—do them good to the promotion of their health, honor, and eſtate.

Thus we can act the friendly part towards all men; and ought to be, and feel, what we profeſs to be. Hereby, we invite them to be our friends, yea, more, we challenge it, for "He that hath friends, muſt ſhew himſelf friendly." But are we ſelfiſh, inſincere, equivocal, and diſguiſed; merely aiming to love them who love us, and to do good to them who do good to us, we ſhall ſoon find ourſelves deſtitute of intimate and faithful friends. Would we, therefore, have good and faithful friends, we muſt maintain a principle of benevolence in our own breaſts; and exerciſe it towards all men, in

their ſeveral characters, ſtations, and relations in life.

Nor may we forget, that pity and compaſſion for others in their diſtreſs and afflictions, are neceſſary for thoſe who wiſh for friends.—This world is a world of ſorrow: "Man is born unto trouble, as the ſparks fly upward." We have always occaſion to pity and commiſerate our fellow creatures: and it is great comfort to a ſocial being, that his neighbours call on him, and ſympathize with him, in the days of his calamity. In many caſes, it takes off half the burden; and gives renewed ſtrength to ſupport the remaining load.

But it muſt be remembered, we often have occaſion not only for an affectionate heart, but alſo for an open hand. A very trifle to us, may be a great deal to a neighbour in diſtreſs: it may ſave his life; at leaſt, it may ſave him many pounds of intereſt, and days of ſorrow. Such a commiſeration of our neighbour's calamity, will give us a peaceful mind—open his heart to friendſhip—excite eſteem in others—and call down the divine benediction; for to the merciful, the father of mercies will ſhow himſelf merciful!

And we may notice further, that as compaſſion for the afflicted; ſo reſpect for the good name of others, will have great influence in obtaining and keeping frends.—We ſhould always ſpeak well of others, when and wherein, we juſtly can; and never evil, unneceſſarily, of any one. I ſaid, *unneceſſarily*, becauſe the honor of God, and good of ſociety may, on ſome occaſions, call for our teſtimony againſt their vices: but we ſhould be ſilent, and ignorant of their faults, when we can with propriety.

We all have faults, and are unwilling to have them blazoned abroad. Let us do as we would be done by: this, is the golden rule and the royal law. By keeping the good name of others, we make to

ourſelves friends; it is their intereſt to be ſo: and a good name may be more than life. Our care to maintain it for our neighbour, will tend to engage his heart in the bonds of genuine friendſhip: And, indeed, will do much to mollify the obdurate heart of an enemy, humanize his ſtubborn ſoul, and teach him to love and admire our virtue.

And as the good name, ſo the worldly intereſt of men, is dear to them: we muſt, therefore, maintain their intereſt to obtain their friendſhip. Very few perſons will forgive, even, an attempt to defraud them of their juſt due. They will not eaſily make friendſhip with one, who has deſignedly hurt, or attempted to hurt their intereſt. By whatever means their intereſt is attacked, whether by falſe information—by oppreſſion—by negligence in buſineſs—by taking advantage of innocence or ignorance—by falſe reckoning, weights or meaſures, it will be noted down againſt that perſon; and will ever lie a heavy bar in the way of pure friendſhip. We muſt maintain the juſt intereſt of our neighbour—give him his juſt due—and ſupport his juſt cauſe; or we ſhall neither obtain, nor keep friends.

Theſe obſervations may be extended and applied to the ſpiritual and eternal intereſt of mankind; eſpecially, among thoſe who believe in a future ſtate, and ſeek after the heavenly inheritance. Among ſuch, our care and concern to promote their ſpiritual intereſt, will have great influence in making warm and laſting friendſhips. Such were the friendſhips of the Galatians toward St. Paul: He bears them record, that if it had been poſſible, they would have plucked out their own eyes, and have given them to him. Such friendſhips are of the pureſt kind: they tend through creature comforts, to the ſupreme good. May they abound more and more in our land!

I only obſerve further, that if we wiſh for friends we muſt conſult the eaſe, comfort and happineſs of our fellow-men.—When people perceive we feel no intereſt in their happineſs, and take no pains to pleaſe them; or avoid giving them trouble; they in return will not concern themſelves about us, nor ſeek or eſteem our connexion. But when they find us friendly—willing and ready to aſſiſt and oblige, as far as our circumſtances will admit: when they find us willing to do, as we would be done by; then, their hearts will be affected, and their love and eſteem will flow out towards us. They will make us the kind returns of friendſhip, and thus we ſhall paſs on, mutually aſſiſting and mutually rejoicing, through the thorny paths of life: and he who drops firſt, will receive on his grave, the friendly tear of heart-felt ſorrow.

Upon what has been ſaid, it will be very obvious to remark, that thoſe who neglect and diſregard friendſhip, are guilty of great folly and inconſiſtency.—Is friendſhip ſuch as above deſcribed, very miſerable muſt be the condition of thoſe, who are deſtitute of friends. Mankind, by nature, are exceedingly wicked. The luſt of the fleſh, the luſt of the eye, and the pride of life, blind our minds, and hurry us into practices cruel, unjuſt, and inhuman!—Natural and moral evils ſurround us.—Temptations, from without, and from within, aſſail us—and innumerable infirmities of body, and of mind, conſtantly attend us.

How very miſerable then is the condition of the friendleſs man! He is liable to pain, ſickneſs and ſorrow—he ſtands alone in the midſt of dangers; and has no confidence in thoſe about him—he is expoſed to envy, malice and revenge; and has none to defend him; nor, to give him timely information, that he may defend himſelf. Mankind by nature are ſelfiſh; and care not how, or what he ſuf-

fers—many will rejoice in his misfortune, and take all the advantage which an unprotected law will give them; I say, *unprotected*, because, few will enforce the law in favor of the friendless man.

Is he destitute of christian benevolence in his own breast, his case is still worse—there is no source of comfort left. To God, he will not; and to man, he cannot go. He has no alternative, but either, to sink into despair and insensibility; or, to bid defiance to the world, shame and censure; and run with violence and speed the thorny path of vice, to the goal of infamy and death.

Indeed, such is the state of this world, that we could not live in it for any time, unless we had friends; and the short space we might continue, would be a scene of vexation and torment.—Such is the condition of the friendless man! And the condition of any man varies from it, but in proportion to the number, faithfulness and influence of his friends. Very absurd, therefore, are those who disregard friendship, and neglect to make to themselves friends when they can. And when we further consider the comforts and advantages of having friends; and the very easy, reasonable and equitable ground on which they may be obtained; we must say, they will die as the fool dieth—with a glorious prize in their hands, and no heart to improve it!

And doubtless, should we carry our views no further than this life, it will be most comfortable and useful to have friends; and be friendly. This is evident, from the miserable condition of the friendless man, just described: and also, from the comforts and advantages of friendship, with regard to stations, relations, ages and characters, as above.

The wise preacher of Israel has beautifully touched on both these considerations, in his observations on a solitary life.—"Two are better than one; because they have a reward for their labor: for if

they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe, to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up. Again, if two lie together, then they have heat: but how can one be warm alone? And if one prevail againſt him, two ſhall withſtand him: and a threefold cord is not quickly broken." Mutual friendſhip, is highly uſeful and comfortable, in every ſtation and relation—it is the cordial of ſocial life—it ſweetens every joy, and moderates every grief.

And let me add; it puts us into circumſtances for doing and receiving more good. This will have great influence on the benevolent heart, and increaſe his pleaſures.—However friendly ourſelves, yet the want of friends would leave us little opportunity for doing good. It would ſeldom happen, we could do a kindneſs in an acceptable manner: the want of friendſhip would bar the kindneſs, or charge it to ſiniſter views; and thus turn our good will into evil. But mutual friends, have always opportunities of doing good; and that which is more, of doing it an agreeable manner. It is kindly received and kindly returned. Our friends will ſpeak well of us—frequently call upon us—and uſe their influence to put us in a way to be uſeful to ourſelves and others. Thus, we ſhall find an enlarged circle of receiving and of doing good.

In this view, friendſhip is not merely a ſocial virtue, but aſſumes a higher character; it is a Chriſtian duty, looking forward to the day of account, and to the recompence of reward. It is the bond of union among the ſons of God. It excites to diligence in every path of duty: and is acceptable to the Supreme Judge. It gives a peaceful conſcience, and claims alliance to divinity.

This reminds me, that friendſhip, in this high ſenſe, reſembles Chriſt, who is the friend of all men. He was always pleaſed in doing good: it

was his meat and drink. He ſought opportunities to ſhow his friendſhip, and never avoided any, who were willing to receive it. He was a friend to ſinners—a friend to his enemies, and gave his life for them. He has left his examples on record, that we ſhould follow his ſteps—do good to all men—and if occaſion ſo require, lay down our life for the brethren.

Thus our friendſhip will reſemble the Divine Example, and obey that injunction, which he has laid on all his followers, to manifeſt their love for him, by loving one another, as he hath loved them. Friendſhip, in this ſenſe, is the diſtinguiſhing characteriſtic of all Chriſt's followers. In vain we talk of our religion without it. Little can be expected from our profeſſions, unleſs we have a principle of divine love in our hearts.

There is, indeed, a friendſhip as above, ariſing from ſimilarity of mental taſte, and various ſecular motives—highly uſeful in its kind, and altogether neceſſary for a tolerable life in the preſent ſtate of things. But it is not that friendſhip which delights in doing good, for goodneſs ſake: It is at beſt, but an external and faint reſemblance of that friendſhip, which was eminently in Chriſt Jeſus; and which it is our duty and glory to imitate in heart and life.—Friendſhip, in this high ſenſe, expreſſes our love and obedience to him, who is eminently ſtiled LOVE. It is the badge of our Chriſtian profeſſion, and a very material evidence of our title to eternal life.—May God grant that the ſame mind of friendſhip ſhall live and abide in us, which was alſo in Chriſt Jeſus!

Finally, may the conſideration that friendſhip reſembles heaven, excite all of us to a friendly converſation. That world is a world of love: All is peace and harmony. God is love. Chriſt is love. Saints and angels dwell in love: And all their worſhip and employments, are expreſſions of love.

No evil paſſions diſturb their minds: No croſs intereſts—no envy—no diſcord can ever enter into that world of peace. All are friends to God—friends to Chriſt—and friends to one another.

This is the happineſs, we profeſs to hope for. This is the heaven, we are profeſſedly met to ſeek after. Let us ſeek with an heavenly temper—love to God and man. We muſt be friendly here, or depend upon it, my hearers, we ſhall never meet friendly there.

How ſhocking to the benevolent ſoul, is the too frequent practice of mankind, in this reſpect! How do they profeſs a hope of a friendly meeting in heaven, and yet, go wrangling all the way there! How many expreſs an expectation of joining before the throne of God, in eternal hallelujahs; yet, when they meet here, accoſt each other in the moſt uncivil, profane and opprobious language!—Depend upon it, ſuch tempers can never enter the peaceful manſions of the God of love.

Let us be wiſe for ourſelves and put on friendſhip—drop all diviſions, animoſities and wrangling; and live in peace and love. Would we go to heaven, we muſt put on the heavenly temper, while here; and love one another as Chriſt hath loved us. Thus ſhall we grow up into a meetneſs for that kingdom of peace.—No bitter reflections will harrow up our ſouls at death.—We ſhall depart in favor with God and man.—Shall exchange a ſtate of imperfect friendſhip, for a ſtate of perfect love.—And ſhall join the friendly ſociety of heaven, to celebrate in eternal praiſes, the friendſhip of our Divine Friend, who hath loved us with an everlaſting love—a *love*, ſtronger than death! AMEN.